

CLAIMS

1. A nonwoven fabric characterized in that the nonwoven fabric is a thermoplastic synthetic fiber nonwoven fabric having a fabric weight of 7 to 50 g/m<sup>2</sup>, an  
5 average yarn diameter of 7 to 40 μm, a partial heat contact bonding ratio of 5 to 30% and a content of a delustering agent of 0.5% by weight or less, or a nonwoven fabric laminate the major component of which is the thermoplastic synthetic fiber nonwoven fabric, and  
10 that the nonwoven fabric has a maximum opening diameter of 200 to 2,000 μm, and shows a transparency of 50% or more, a powder leakage ratio of 10% by weight or less and a hydrophilicity of less than 10 sec.

2. The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1,  
15 wherein the nonwoven fabric is characterized in that the nonwoven fabric is a thermoplastic synthetic fiber nonwoven fabric having a fabric weight of 12 to 30 g/m<sup>2</sup>, an average yarn diameter of 12 to 30 μm, a partial heat contact bonding ratio of 5 to 30% and a content of a  
20 delustering agent of 0.2% by weight or less, or a nonwoven fabric laminate the major component of which is the thermoplastic synthetic fiber nonwoven fabric, and that the nonwoven fabric has a maximum opening diameter of 400 to 1,650 μm, and shows a transparency of 60% or  
25 more, a powder leakage ratio of 5% by weight or less and a hydrophilicity of less than 10 sec.

3. The nonwoven fabric according to claim 1, wherein the nonwoven fabric is a laminate of a thermoplastic synthetic fiber nonwoven fabric having an  
30 average yarn diameter of 7 to 15 μm and a thermoplastic synthetic fiber nonwoven fabric having an average yarn diameter of 15 to 40 μm.

4. The nonwoven fabric according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the thermoplastic synthetic fiber  
35 nonwoven fabric is a spun-bonded nonwoven fabric composed of a polyolefin filament yarn.

5. The nonwoven fabric according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the thermoplastic synthetic fiber nonwoven fabric is a spun-bonded nonwoven fabric composed of a polyester filament yarn.

5         6. The nonwoven fabric according to claim 5, wherein the thermoplastic synthetic fiber nonwoven fabric is a spun-bonded nonwoven fabric composed of an aliphatic polyester filament yarn.

10         7. The nonwoven fabric according to claim 6, wherein the aliphatic polyester filament yarn is a filament yarn of a polyester selected from a poly(D-lactic acid), a poly(L-lactic acid), a copolymer of D-lactic acid and L-lactic acid, a copolymer of D-lactic acid and a hydroxycarboxylic acid, a copolymer of L-lactic acid and a hydroxycarboxylic acid, a copolymer of D-lactic acid, L-lactic acid and a hydroxycarboxylic acid, or a blend of these polymers.

20         8. The nonwoven fabric according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein a synthetic resin or a fibrous material of 2 to 15 g/m<sup>2</sup> having a melting point lower than that of the thermoplastic synthetic fiber by 30 to 200°C is laminated to the thermoplastic synthetic fiber nonwoven fabric.

25         9. A tea bag prepared by filling a tea material, to be extracted, into a bag composed of the nonwoven fabric according to any one of claims 1 to 8, and sealing the tea material.

10         10. The tea bag according to claim 9, wherein the bag is tetrahedral-shaped.

30         11. The tea bag according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the tea material to be extracted is black tea, green tea or oolong tea.